

SENATE BILL 2775

By McNally

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68,
Chapter 11, relative to religious liberty rights of
hospital patients.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 11, Part 2, is amended by
adding the following as a new, appropriately designated section:

68-11-2__.

(a) The general assembly finds that:

(1) The purpose of this section is to protect the religious liberty rights of
individuals receiving care in hospitals in this state to the extent permissible under
the United States Constitution and the Constitution of Tennessee;

(2) A hospital should not be directed to perform any medical treatment or
forcibly administer any serious or potentially harmful medication to any patient
that substantially burdens the patient's sincere exercise of religion, or
unjustifiably invades the person's bodily integrity or personal security; and

(3) Every person has a right to abstain from medical treatment in
accordance with the tenets of the person's religion.

(b) For purposes of this section, "exercise of religion" means the exercise of
religion under under article I, § 3 of the Constitution of Tennessee and the first
amendment to the United States Constitution.

(c) No individual shall coerce, compel, or force any hospital licensed by this state
under this chapter to violate any individual's free exercise of religion or religious beliefs.

A violation of this subsection (c) is a Class A misdemeanor.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012, the public welfare requiring it.